

VZCZCXRO6901
PP RUEHBC RUEHDBU RUEHDE RUEHDIR RUEHFL RUEHIHL RUEHKUK RUEHKW RUEHLA
RUEHROV RUEHSR
DE RUEHAK #1960/01 2121307
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 311307Z JUL 07
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3217
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 001960

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/26/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [OREP](#) [AJ](#) [AM](#) [IZ](#) [IR](#) [RS](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: STAFFDEL GROVE'S MEETINGS WITH TURKISH MFA
OFFICIALS

Classified By: CDA Nancy McEldowney for reasons 1.4 b, d

11. (C) SUMMARY. A Senate Appropriations Committee staffdel led by Paul Grove discussed Russia, Iraq and Iran with Turkish MFA officials on July 26. Emphasizing the importance of Turkey's strategic partnership with the United States, the Turks stressed the damage to bilateral relations if the House passes an Armenian "genocide" resolution (AGR), or if the U.S. does not adequately address PKK terrorism originating from northern Iraq. On Armenia, officials repeated that Turkey is prepared to "be visionary" and to go beyond merely preventing AGR passage. Some gesture of reciprocity on the part of Armenia, however, is needed in order to sell this approach to the Turkish public. END SUMMARY.

TURKEY READY TO BE "VISIONARY" ON ARMENIA

12. (C) Noting the value of Congressional visits and the importance of the U.S.-Turkish partnership, MFA officials stressed to Staffdel Grove that House passage of an AGR would damage U.S.-Turkey relations. Grove replied that educating Congress on the issue is key. Director General for Americas Vefahan Ocak told the Staffdel Turkey's next step would be "visionary". He added that Turkey would induce Azerbaijan to also "be progressive."

13. (C) DG for Russia, Caucasus and Central Asia Resit Uman told Staffdel Grove that passage of the AGR would be unhelpful to furthering dialogue with Armenia. "Let me underline our pre-disposition to normalizing our relations with Armenia," he said. What Turkey needs are certain gestures from Armenia in response to Turkey's openings. He emphasized that the GOT may be in a better position to take more substantial initiatives following its strong showing in the July 22 general elections. Uman added that, while the Armenian diaspora's hostility to Turkey is understandable, the Armenian government's active encouragement of resolutions and decisions against Turkey in foreign parliaments is incompatible with Armenia's declared desire to normalize relations. Turkey's relations with Armenia are not linked to the Ngorno-Karabakh issue, Uman claimed, but Turks recognize that progress on bilateral relations would reverberate positively on N-K. Turkey is encouraging Azerbaijan to be more forthcoming in its negotiations with Armenia and less combative in its rhetoric.

A MODUS VIVENDI WITH RUSSIA, A QUIET APPROACH IN THE REGION

14. (C) Uman said Turkey, like the United States, seeks a

modus vivendi with Russia. Turkey's good relations with Russia advance its bilateral relations with other countries in the region and allow Turkey to help resolve crises between Russia and other CIS countries, such as Georgia. Russian cooperation is essential to countering the spread of WMDs and combating international terrorism and human and drug trafficking, and Russia is Turkey's second largest trade partner, behind Germany, he commented. Uman listed twelve different bilateral dialogues taking place between the two foreign ministries, adding that the political dialogue is also developing.

15. (C) Uman opined that Russia's deepening nationalism is influencing its foreign policy, explaining some of the escalating rhetoric from Moscow. Today's Russia, he said, is nearly eighty percent Slavic -- a figure higher than at any time since the early Tsarist period. Russia wants to be treated like an equal partner and to defend its last bastions of influence. Despite Putin's popularity and near absolute power, Uman said that Turkey sees "almost zero probability" that he will extend his term of office. Putin does not wish to be likened to the other autocrats of the region.

16. (C) Uman agreed with Grove that Russia sees the U.S. as over-extended and is seeking, in particular, to benefit from the anti-U.S. mood in the Middle East. He noted Putin's first trip to Saudi Arabia, and Russia's recent gain of Organization for Islamic Conference (OIC) observer status. More importantly, Russia exploits its energy and military links to create dependency and takes advantage of the priority that the U.S. and the West place on democratization. Russia is not hindered by the democratic deficiencies of the governments with which it deals, he said. At the same time, democratic revolutions in Ukraine and Georgia have convinced

ANKARA 00001960 002 OF 002

regional autocrats that close U.S. relations put their rule at risk. Turkey agrees that democratic change is at the core of stability and progress, but change needs to be advanced carefully, without alienating leaders. Responding to a question from Grove about the utility of, for example, \$75 million to support democracy in Iran, Uman said it is not Turkey's practice to pursue such initiatives.

TURKISH PRIORITIES IN THE REGION...

17. (C) The staffdel said they were assessing regional conditions to help the Senate align U.S. priorities with budgetary expenditures. One priority is the refugee and internally displaced persons crisis in the region, for which Grove acknowledged the U.S. bears some responsibility. Ocak listed as long-term Turkish priorities: better harnessing of Caspian energy resources, a more modern Muslim world, improved EU understanding of Turkey's compatibility, peace in the Balkans, expanded Middle East trade, and expanded U.S.-Turkish trade relations.

...IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

18. (C) On Afghanistan, Ocak admitted that the situation warranted more PRTs but said that Turkey has done more than many other nations and that he believes it has reached its full capacity to contribute. On Iraq, Ocak said he understood the numerous challenges facing the U.S. At the same time, Turkey was facing problems as well. He said Barzani needed to "shut up, behave, and show some manners," and he cautioned that the KRG needs to keep in mind that they will have to live with Turkey.

19. (C) Iraq Special Representative Officer Aydin Selcen emphasized the influence Barzani has on Turkish public opinion, but added that Kurdish aspirations are also a threat to non-Kurdish Sunni, Shia and Turkmen communities in Iraq. Holding a referendum on Kirkuk this year without the

necessary preparations violates the Iraqi constitution and risks the emergence of more ethnic strife. Delaying by two to three years will allow Kirkuk residents to find their own solutions.

...AND IN IRAN

¶10. (C) Head of Department for Middle East Affairs Sedat Onal, who served in Tehran, said that it is not clear Iran really prefers a unified Iraq. Iran has been cultivating its relations with the current Iraqi Shia leadership for years and has influence; a divided Iraq still presents Iran with a sympathetic neighbor and prevents the emergence of an Iraq that could, one day, counter-balance it. In addition, Selcen noted that Iran has supported Sunni insurgent groups while, at the same time, Shia insurgent groups in Iraq compete with each other, using Iran to advance their own narrow objectives.

¶11. (U) Staffdel Grove did not have the opportunity to clear this cable.

Visit Ankara's Classified Web Site at
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

MCELDOWNEY